

Proverbs 26

"Wisdom Instructions On Dishonorable Conduct"

Below you will find the Scripture Passages and Bible Study notes for this weeks lesson. They are also attached to this email if you would like to put them in a folder or share them with family and friends. If you have a specific prayer request or would like someone to be placed on the prayer list please forward your requests to Sbcdoylestown@yahoo.com. If your schedule allows, please consider joining us for our live bible study on Weds. 12:00 p.m. or 7:30 p.m. I pray that this study will be a blessing to you.

Pastor Hamlin

THEME: Wisdom For The Leaders (Chapters 25-31)

PURPOSE: Solomon wanted to impart wisdom to all people, regardless of their age, sex, or position in society. These short, wise sayings give us practical wisdom for daily living. We should study them diligently and integrate them into our life.

OUTLINE:

1. FACTS ON THE FOOL (26:1–12): A fool should not be trusted or honored.
2. SEVEN TIMES SMARTER (26:13–16): A lazy person thinks he's smart, but he's only full of excuses.
3. MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS (26:17–19): You should not interfere in other people's arguments.
4. GOSSIP GENERATES GRIEF (26:20–28): The hurt you intend for others by gossiping about them will come back on you.

Proverbs 26

(New International Version)

(Verse 1-12) FACTS ON THE FOOL; A fool should not be trusted or honored.

Like snow in summer or rain in harvest, honor is not fitting for a fool. 2 Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest. 3 A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the backs of fools! 4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you yourself will be just like him. 5 Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes. 6 Sending a message by the hands of a fool is like cutting off one's feet or drinking poison. 7 Like the useless legs of one who is lame is a proverb in the mouth of a fool. 8 Like tying a stone in a sling is the giving of honor to a fool. 9 Like a thornbush in a drunkard's hand is a proverb in the mouth of a fool. 10 Like an archer who wounds at random is one who hires a fool or any passer-by. 11 As a dog returns to its vomit, so

fools repeat their folly. 12 Do you see a person wise in their own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for them.

Proverbs 26:4, 5

These two verses seem to be in contradiction. But the writer is saying that we shouldn't take foolish people seriously and try to reason with their empty arguments. This will only make them proud and determined to win the argument. In some situations, you ought not to even try to answer fools, for there is no way you can penetrate their closed minds. You may, in fact, be stooping to their level if you do choose to answer. Fools will abuse you, and you will be tempted to abuse them in return. There are other situations where your common sense tells you to answer in order to expose their pride and folly.

Proverbs 26:7

Some people are so blind that they won't get much wisdom from reading these proverbs. Only those who want to be wise have the receptive attitude needed to make the most of them. If we want to learn from God, he will respond and pour out his heart to us (1:23).

Proverbs 26:8

Sometimes when someone in a group causes discord or dissension, the leader tries to make him loyal and productive by giving him a place of privilege or responsibility. This usually doesn't work. In fact, it is like tying the stone to the sling it won't go anywhere and will swing back and hurt you. The dissenter's new power may be just what he needs to manipulate the group.

Proverbs 26:9

Normally the first prick of a thorn alerts us, so we remove the thorn before it damages us. A drunk person, however, may not feel the thorn, and so it will work its way into his flesh. Similarly, a fool may not feel the sting of a proverb because he does not see how it applies to his life. Instead of taking its point to heart, a fool will apply it to his church, his employer, his spouse, or whomever he is rebelling against. The next time you find yourself saying, "So-and-so should really pay attention to that," stop and ask yourself, Is there a message in it for me?

(Verses 13-16) SEVEN TIMES SMARTER: A lazy person thinks he's smart, but he's only full of excuses.

13 A sluggard says, "There's a lion in the road, a fierce lion roaming the streets!"¹⁴ As a door turns on its hinges, so a sluggard turns on his bed. 15 A sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he is too lazy to bring it back to his mouth. 16 A sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven people who answer discreetly.

Proverbs 26:13-16

If a person is not willing to work, he or she can find endless excuses to avoid it. But laziness is more dangerous than a prowling lion. The less you do, the less you want to do, and the more useless you become. To overcome laziness, take a few small steps toward change. Set a concrete, realistic goal.

Figure out the steps needed to reach it, and follow those steps. Pray for strength and persistence. To keep your excuses from making you useless, stop making useless excuses.

(Verses 17-19) MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS: You should not interfere in other people's arguments.

17 Like one who grabs a stray dog by the ears is someone who rushes into a quarrel not their own. 18 Like a maniac shooting flaming arrows of death 19 is one who deceives their neighbor and says, "I was only joking!"

Proverbs 26:17

Yanking the ears of a dog is a good way to get bitten, and interfering in arguments is a good way to get hurt. Many times both arguers will turn on the person who interferes. It is best simply to keep out of arguments that are none of your business. If you must become involved, try to wait until the arguers have stopped fighting and cooled off a bit. Then maybe you can help them mend their differences and their relationship.

(Verses 20-28) GOSSIP GENERATES GRIEF: The hurt you intend for others by gossiping about them will come back on you.

20 Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down. 21 As charcoal to embers and as wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome person for kindling strife. 22 The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to the inmost parts. 23 Like a coating of silver dross on earthenware are fervent lips with an evil heart. 24 Enemies disguise themselves with their lips, but in their hearts they harbor deceit. 25 Though their speech is charming, do not believe them, for seven abominations fill their hearts. 26 Their malice may be concealed by deception, but their wickedness will be exposed in the assembly. 27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it; if someone rolls a stone, it will roll back on them. 28 A lying tongue hates those it hurts, and a flattering mouth works ruin.

Proverbs 26:20

Talking about every little irritation and piece of gossip only keeps the fires of anger going. Refusing to discuss them cuts the fuel line and makes the fires die out. Does someone continually irritate you? Decide not to complain about the person, and see if your irritation dies from lack of fuel.